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COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS 1/

I. GENERAL

1. The British Virgin Islands comprises nearly 30 islands and islets, 16 of which are inhabited. They cover a total of 153 square kilometres and lie 96 kilometres east of Puerto Rico and 225 kilometres north-west of Saint Kitts and Nevis. The Territory also lies close to the United States Virgin Islands. The most important islands in the Territory are Tortola (54 square kilometres, the largest in the group), Anegada (38 square kilometres), Virgin Gorda (21 square kilometres) and Jost Van Dyke (9 square kilometres). Peter Island and Cooper Island are mainly holiday resorts. The main airport is situated on Beef Island. Road Town, the capital, is located on Tortola.

2. The climate is subtropical and is moderated by trade winds. The average temperature in winter ranges from 20 to 28 degrees centigrade and in summer from 26 to 31 degrees centigrade. Mean annual rainfall is 1,270 millimetres.

3. On 18 November 1990, an earthquake measuring 5.3 on the Richter scale was recorded in the Territory and, although there was no loss of life, substantial property damage was caused (A/AC.109/1060, para 4). On 8 January 1994, an earthquake measuring 5.5 on the Richter scale shook Tortola and other parts of the territorial chain. According to the Territory's Disaster Preparedness Coordinator, the earthquake also affected areas of St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands, 2/ and the Netherlands Antilles. 2/

4. On 16 December 1993, Chief Minister Lavity Stoutt presented a report entitled "Population trends in the British Virgin Islands: 1970-1991" to the Territory's Legislative Council. The report, which was prepared by the territorial Government in cooperation with the Regional Census Office based in Trinidad and Tobago, revised the preliminary census figures reported in the previous working papers on the Territory. According to the report, the population of the Territory increased by nearly 47 per cent from 10,985 in 1980 to 16,108 in 1993. A soaring immigration rate was largely responsible for the growth. The territorial Government had estimated the population in 1991 to be 17,400, with an annual growth rate of 4.2 per cent. 3/

5. Owing to the Territory's special relationship with the United States Virgin Islands, its residents are exempt from the visa requirements of the United States of America when visiting the United States Virgin Islands. As a result of this arrangement, however, the Territory continued to experience some difficulties with illegal immigrants.

II. CONSTITUTIONAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

A. Constitution

6. The Territory is administered under the Virgin Islands Constitution Order, 1976, which came into force in 1977 and was amended in 1979 and 1982. The

Government consists of a Governor appointed by the Queen, an Executive Council and a Legislative Council.

7. The Governor, Mr. Peter A. Penfold, is responsible for defence and internal security, external affairs, the civil service and administration of the courts. He acts in consultation with the Chief Minister on these matters. He has reserved legislative powers necessary in the exercise of his special responsibilities. On other matters, however, he is required to act in accordance with the advice of the Executive Council. The Constitution makes provision for the post of Deputy Governor.

8. The Executive Council consists of the Governor as Chairman, the Chief Minister, three other ministers and one ex officio member (the Attorney General).

9. The Legislative Council consists of a Speaker chosen from outside the Council, one ex officio member (the Attorney General) and nine elected members returned from single-member constituencies every four years. The Governor appoints as Chief Minister the elected member of the Legislative Council most likely to command a majority in that body. The other ministers are appointed by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister and are assigned responsibility for any government business, except in those areas for which the Governor retains responsibility. The Constitution provides for a Deputy Chief Minister and a Leader of the Opposition.

Judiciary

10. The law of the British Virgin Islands is the common law of the United Kingdom, together with locally enacted legislation. It is administered by the Court of Summary Jurisdiction, the Magistrates' Court, the Juvenile Court and, by special arrangement, the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, which comprises a High Court of Justice and a Court of Appeal. There is a resident puisne judge, whose jurisdiction includes Anguilla.

11. In October 1993, Mr. Frederick Bruce-Lyle, a national of St. Vincent and the Grenadines was sworn in as the Territory's magistrate. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Bruce-Lyle was Chief Magistrate in his country. He has also served in Belize, Ghana and Zambia. 4/

12. Following concerns expressed by the Attorney General and a visiting High Court judge over inadequate judicial and penal facilities, it was reported in late 1993 that the Government of the United Kingdom had agreed to provide approximately £600,000 towards a project for the expansion of the High Court and the residence of the judge. Work was expected to begin in March 1994. 5/ During the same period, the territorial Government invited bids from contractors in the Territory for the construction of a new government prison on Tortola. The cost was estimated to be in excess of US$ 3.5 million. 6/

B. Constitutional developments

13. It was reported previously that, on 23 November 1992, the Legislative Council had adopted a resolution calling for a review of the Constitution. In that connection, in February 1993, a senior official of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office had visited the Territory (see A/AC.109/1142, paras. 13-15).

14. On 26 July 1993, the territorial Government announced that the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs had appointed a three-member Constitutional Review Commission, headed by Mr. Walter Wallace, Adviser to the Secretary of State on constitutional matters for the dependent Territories and a former Governor of the British Virgin Islands. The other Commissioners were Mr. Howard Furgus, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Montserrat, and Mr. Alfred Penn, a former Deputy Governor of the British Virgin Islands.

15. Under its terms of reference, the Commission would review the present Constitution of the British Virgin Islands and make recommendations for possible changes, in response to the resolution of the Legislative Council of the Territory, and in furtherance of the policies of the Government of the United Kingdom, to ensure the continued advancement and good government of the British Virgin Islands. In carrying out its task, the Commission would take into account the views of the people of the Territory and the local situation. The Commission would consult with the Governor, members of the Executive and Legislative Councils, interested organizations and members of the public. In a subsequent release, it was announced that the Secretary to the Constitutional Commission had been appointed and that an office for the Commission had been established at Road Town. The Commissioners were expected to commence hearings on 1 November 1993 and would visit each district on Tortola, as well as Virgin Gorda, Anegada and Jost Van Dyke.

16. According to press reports, the Constitutional Review Commission held 12 public meetings throughout the Territory, conducted approximately 100 personal interviews and received 40 submissions, including a 63-page statement from the League of British Virgin Islanders Incorporated, an organization whose membership comprises British Virgin Islanders resident in the United States Virgin Islands. 7/

17. Among the issues raised with the Commission were the question of the future political status of the Territory; reduction of the powers of the Governor; a bill of rights and several revisions to the Constitution, including enlargement of the Legislative Council; the election of the Chief Minister by territory-wide vote (or vote at large); limitation of the terms of office of elected members; and the repeal of the constitutional provision that currently debars persons with dual nationality (United States and British Virgin Islands) from holding legislative office. Other concerns include issues relating to naturalization and proxy voting. 7/

18. In a statement to the press following the conclusion of the work of the Constitutional Review Commission, the Chairman of the Commission said that the report would be submitted to the Secretary of State by 8 December 1993. He noted that past practice would indicate that the report, if generally acceptable to the Secretary of State, would be published in the Territory. Following a

debate by the Legislative Council on the recommendations of the Commission, the report would then be returned to the Secretary of State for his final decision. The Chairman cautioned, however, that the length of time it would take for a decision on the changes to be made to the Constitution would be determined by the level of agreement reached between the Territory's legislators and United Kingdom officials. 8/

C. Political parties and elections

19. In the general elections held in the Territory in 1990, the ruling Virgin Islands Party, led by Mr. Lavity Stoutt, the Chief Minister, won six of the nine elected seats. Voter turnout was 70 per cent.

20. In accordance with amendments to the Elections Act of 1977 which, inter alia, allowed for continuous voter registration, the appointment of a Supervisor of Elections and the establishment of a permanent Elections Office, the public was reminded periodically that continuous voter registration remained in effect, and was directed to electoral offices throughout the Territory.

21. On 18 May 1993, the Acting Governor appointed a Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council. The Office became vacant on 14 May 1993 when the previous leader tendered his resignation from the office he had held since 7 December 1990. 9/

22. On 29 December 1993, the Leader of the Opposition, supported by the other Opposition member, informed the Legislative Council that provision for the proxy vote should be repealed before the next general election, scheduled to be held in 1994. 10/ As previously reported, the process that was first introduced during the last elections resulted in allegations of irregularities (see A/AC.109/1060, para. 19). The League of British Virgin Islanders, in its submission to the Constitutional Review Commission, also recommended the repeal of the proxy vote provision. 10/

23. In May 1993, the Speaker of the Legislative Council led the Territory's delegation to the Tenth Conference of Presiding Officers and Clerks of the Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic Region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, which was held in Dominica in May 1993. The Speaker also attended the Fifth Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Seminar at Perth, Australia. Also the Minister for Health, Education and Welfare visited the United Kingdom, where he participated in discussions at the House of Parliament on Commonwealth parliamentary affairs. 11/

24. In a related development, six United Kingdom parliamentarians visited the Territory for three days in August 1993. The delegation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association of the United Kingdom was led by a member of the House of Commons Select Committee on Trade and Industry. While in the Territory, the delegation met with the Governor and members of the Legislative Council, as well as with the business community. 12/

D. Future status of the Territory

25. Information concerning the future status of the Territory is contained in the previous working paper prepared by the Secretariat (see A/AC.109/1142, paras. 18-34).

1. Position of the territorial Government

26. The stated policy of the ruling Virgin Islands Party is to maintain the present relationship with the United Kingdom while seeking greater autonomy in regional affairs.

27. On 28 October 1993, prior to the arrival in the British Virgin Islands of the Constitutional Review Commission, the Chief Minister stated in a public address that, after 25 years of ministerial government, the Territory was ready for constitutional advancement commensurate with political and economic advancement. He expressed the belief that the people of the Territory should prepare themselves for the ultimate status of independence and that it was the responsibility of the United Kingdom, as administering Power, to assist them in attaining that goal. In his view, neither should independence be thrust upon the Territory suddenly, nor should the Territory be driven into a state of unpreparedness. According to the Chief Minister, it would be best for the Territory to obtain independence through the gradual transfer of power to elected representatives.

28. The Chief Minister reiterated that the time had come for the British Virgin Islands to be granted full internal self-government, and to ensure that the people of the Territory could monitor the Government's performance before entrusting it with the mandate to lead the Territory to the next goal. He also stressed that any constitutional change must contribute to preparing the people for independence. He called upon the people to support his quest for full internal self-government and cautioned against reducing the responsibilities of elected representatives. 13/

2. Position of the administering Power

29. On 24 November 1993, in a keynote address to a conference on dependent Territories entitled "Progress through partnership", Mr. Douglas Hurd, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, outlined the policy of the Government of the United Kingdom with regard to its dependent Territories. Mr. Hurd noted that the world had changed so dramatically that the pressure to decolonize, which had been so strong, had become more complicated. The assumption that the granting of independence was the only way to make progress had evaporated. With the exception of Hong Kong, which was a special case, there were some 2.6 million people living in all the Territories of the former colonial Powers. Some Territories were bound by unavoidable political realities, and most of them showed no sign of wishing to move to full political independence.

30. According to the Secretary of State, the concept of statehood or independence had changed and, in that connection, some Territories had exercised their right not to press for independence. Some Territories were too small to be viable, even by today's terms; others could not "support" the expense; and yet others had powerful neighbours and felt the need for protection. They look to a larger State, usually the metropolitan Power, to provide such protection. Sometimes, States formed an association that gave them statehood and internal self-government but enabled another country to look after their defence. Mr. Hurd pointed out that variety was the one common feature and that there was no blueprint for all the Territories represented. Each Territory had unique characteristics and its situation therefore needed to be examined in that light.

31. The Secretary of State made it clear that there was no doubt about his Government's sovereignty over its dependent Territories, the basis for which was not just legal. All the United Kingdom dependent Territories were British because they wanted to be. They had the right to self-determination and had all determined that they should be British. The manifestation of the right to self-determination varied with the circumstances, but the primary principle was that no Territory remained British against its will.

32. Furthermore, the relationship between the United Kingdom and its dependent Territories should be one of equal partnership to the extent possible. The Government of the United Kingdom no longer believed in the idea of a colonial office that issued instructions. The policy of the United Kingdom was aimed at helping to provide for the economic independence of the dependent Territories and at paving the way for the possibility of political independence when the population so wished and if the circumstances of the Territory allowed.

33. According to the Secretary of State, the Government of the United Kingdom had to deal with economies which, in a number of Territories, were vulnerable because of their size, geographic location, climate and limited natural resources. His Government had helped to mitigate those factors and to build up stronger, more diversified and sustainable local economies. It did not believe that aid from the United Kingdom was a long-term solution. The dependent Territories must look to attain economic self-sufficiency to the extent possible.

34. In evaluating the progress made in the Caribbean dependent Territories, the Secretary of State noted, inter alia, that the British Virgin Islands had made outstanding progress in recent years, by finding a niche in up-market tourism and specializing in offshore financial services. He pointed out that that progress had yielded an annual per capita income of nearly US$ 10,000, higher than Greece, Portugal or Puerto Rico. Such successes had been achieved in some Territories because the elected Governments had worked with the Government of the United Kingdom towards a strategy of growth based on new opportunities and better utilization of national resources.

35. The Secretary of State cautioned, however, that the Caribbean Territories were situated along one of the main drug-trafficking routes from Latin America, which made tourism and offshore financing particularly vulnerable to the activities of drug-trafficking. That in turn threatened the fabric of Caribbean society, because it undermined the basis of economic development. He recalled

the measures taken by the United Kingdom Government in partnership with the Territories to root out drug-trafficking, money-laundering and organized crime. He emphasized that, in addition, both the United Kingdom and the territorial Governments were developing other forms of progress through partnerships and through jointly agreed "policy plans". They were also committed publicly to a programme of economic development and good government. In conclusion, the Secretary of State said that his Government had "an open mind, though not an open purse". 14/

36. During the period under review, several representatives of the administering Power made statements regarding the policy of the United Kingdom Government towards its dependent Territories. In June 1993, in an address to the London-based British Caribbean Association, the Minister for Overseas Development stated that the 1986 review of policy towards the Caribbean dependent Territories had concluded that Her Majesty's Government would neither encourage nor discourage moves to independence. If, however, it was the clearly and constitutionally expressed wish of the people, the United Kingdom would be ready to respond positively. 15/

37. In November 1993, the Governor of the Territory stated in an official release that the Constitutional Commissioners had expressed their concern to him, regarding a report that they believed was being widely circulated in the Territory. The report stated that the United Nations had adopted a resolution that required all Non-Self-Governing Territories, including the British Virgin Islands, to proceed to independence by the year 2000. The Governor had sought clarification from the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, and had been assured that there was no truth to the report. He was informed that reference was being made to a General Assembly resolution on the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. He noted that such resolutions were not binding on Member States, and that the United Kingdom representative to the Fourth Committee had repeatedly made it clear that it was incorrect to equate self-determination solely with independence. 16/

38. According to the Governor, the policy of the United Kingdom Government was that the wishes of the people of the British Virgin Islands remained of primary importance; and that the right to self-determination might be expressed at each and every general election in the Territories. He reiterated that the policy of the Government towards its dependent Territories remained as stated by the Minister for Overseas Development (see para. 36). The Governor also released the statement of the representative of the United Kingdom to the Fourth Committee on 14 October 1993. 17/

3. Action taken by regional organizations

39. The Government of Grenada, acting as host to and subsequently chairing the 19th meeting of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Standing Committee of Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs, which was held on 10 and 11 May 1993, invited a delegation of the Special Committee comprising the permanent representatives of the Congo, Cuba and Grenada for consultations. In the final communiqué of the meeting (A/48/401, annex), the Ministers for Foreign Affairs

reviewed the current developments concerning the decolonization process of the United Nations and took note of the position of the administering Powers and the leaders of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Caribbean that they were primarily concerned with economic and financial viability. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs reaffirmed their commitment to the inalienable right of the people of those Territories to determine for themselves their future political status.

40. Following the meeting, the delegation of the Special Committee also visited Barbados and paid a courtesy call on the Governor-General of Barbados, Dame Nita Barrow. The delegation also held consultations with the Vice-President of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Representative for the Eastern Caribbean.

4. Action taken by the General Assembly

41. On 10 December 1993, the General Assembly adopted a consolidated resolution (resolution 48/51) on 10 dependent Territories, section IV of which was specifically devoted to the Territory. In its resolution, the Assembly, inter alia, requested the administering Power to take into account any views or wishes which might be expressed by the territorial Government and the people of the Territory in connection with the constitutional review; and also requested the administering Power, in implementing its review of policy towards, and management of, its Caribbean dependent Territories, to give the highest consideration to the opinions expressed by the Government and the people of the Territory.

42. The General Assembly reiterated its call upon the administering Power to facilitate the admission of the Territory to associate membership in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), as well as its participation in other regional and international organizations; and called upon UNDP to continue its technical assistance to the British Virgin Islands, bearing in mind the vulnerability of the Territory to external economic factors and the scarcity of skilled workers in the Territory. The Assembly also called upon all countries and organizations with expertise in the development of skilled labour to grant the territorial Government every assistance in the implementation of its educational and manpower training programmes. It noted with satisfaction the measures being taken by the territorial Government to prevent drug trafficking and money laundering, and urged the administering Power to continue its assistance to the Territory in those endeavours.

E. External relations

43. The British Virgin Islands is an associate member of the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and its subsidiary bodies, including the Caribbean Development and Coordination Committee. The Territory is also represented at meetings of the Caribbean Group for Cooperation in Economic Development, sponsored by the World Bank.

44. The Territory is an associate member of CARICOM, and participates in the activities of those organizations and institutions associated with CARICOM, including the Caribbean Development Bank and the University of the West Indies. The Territory was represented by the Chief Minister at the Fourteenth Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM, held at Nassau, from 5 to 8 July 1993. The Territory is also a member of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and was represented by the Deputy Chief Minister, Mr. Ralph O'Neal, at the twenty-second meeting of Heads of Authority, held in Saint Lucia in June 1993.

45. During the period under review, the British Virgin Islands continued to participate directly in regional and international conferences and programmes organized by Governments, international organizations and multilateral agencies. In that connection, in November 1993, the Territory was represented at the Sixth Europe/Caribbean Conference, held at Santo Domingo, and the Conference on Dependent Territories, held in London. During the same month, the Territory hosted a meeting of Caribbean overseas countries and Territories and the European Commission. The meeting, which was called at the initiative of the Chief Minister of the British Virgin Islands, was attended by 50 delegates from United Kingdom and Netherlands dependent Territories, from the Governments of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, as well as from the European Commission, the European Investment Bank (EIB), OECS, CDB and private sector representatives from Aruba, Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the Territory. 18/

46. According to press reports, in September 1993, the Territory hosted a meeting of Financial Secretaries of dependent Territories, the first Mutual Support Seminar for Superintendents of Prisons and Prison Training Officers of the British dependent Territories and the sixteenth annual Conference of the Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council. In January 1994, the Territory also hosted a conference of Attorneys General of British dependent Territories. In his opening remarks to the Conference, which was attended by the Attorney General of the United Kingdom, the Chief Minister of the Territory underscored the significance of the Conference as a forum to explore ways and means of communication and cooperation between the Territories and the administering Power. 19/

47. The Territory continued to receive visits from high-level representatives of the administering Power, other Governments and regional and international organizations. His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, paid an official visit to the Territory in March 1993. Also, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, accompanied by officials of the Treasury, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Bank of England visited the Territory in September 1993. The Economic Secretary to the Treasury last visited the Territory in November 1992 (see A/AC.109/1142, para. 38). Another United Kingdom official, the Deputy Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, visited the Territory from 27 to 30 November 1993. The Head of the dependent Territories Regional Secretariat, based in Barbados, visited the Territory in June 1993, and participated in the meeting between Caribbean overseas Territories and the European Commission, which was held in the Territory in November 1993. 20/

48. The Governor-General of the Netherlands Antilles led a delegation on an official visit to the Territory in September 1993. Also in September 1993, the head of the Antigua-based Economics Affairs Secretariat of OECS visited the Territory, as part of a familiarization tour, and held discussions with the Governor, the Chief Minister and government officials on OECS activities in the Territory in the areas of environment, education and fisheries. In July 1993, a team of eight consultants from the delegation of the Commission of the European Communities in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean visited the Territory. The purpose of the visit was to identify projects to be financed by the European Development Fund. 21/

49. The special relationship between the Territory and its neighbour, the United States Virgin Islands, continued to be strengthened. The twenty-first annual United States Virgin Islands/British Virgin Islands Friendship Day was celebrated on 30 October 1993 in the Territory. In their statements on that occasion, the respective Governors of the Territories recognized the special bonds of friendship between the two Territories and called for increased cooperation to fight the increase in drugs and violent crime affecting both Territories. 5/

50. In a related development, it was reported in December 1993 that the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States had signed the British Virgin Islands/United States Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico Boundary Treaty which, inter alia, establishes the boundaries between those Territories. The Treaty was a result of two years of negotiations and meetings in the Territories, London and Washington. The Deputy Minister for Natural Resources and Labour said that the Treaty would give the Territory a greater measure of control. The Deputy Governor noted that the Treaty was significant for the Territory, because the declaration of the 12-mile territorial limit would be more meaningful. He mentioned that the maritime boundary between the British Virgin Islands and Anguilla was yet to be settled. 22/

F. Public service

51. On 31 March 1993, in delivering the 1993 Budget Speech, the Chief Minister stated that the public service had grown over the past decade to over 1,000 established posts, and nearly as many non-established posts. He announced further changes to the structure of the service. The staff of Office of Disaster Preparedness had been separated from the Office of the Deputy Governor, to form a new division. In other changes, a new department, the Financial Services Department, had been established as a result of the amalgamation of the Commercial Registry and the Financial Services Inspectorate.

52. In the same speech, the Chief Minister informed the Legislative Council that the Territory had been experiencing extreme difficulty in recruiting and retaining competent and appropriately trained persons to key positions in the financial services sector. He noted that the territorial Government was convinced that the existing civil service salary scales were too inflexible to address the somewhat specialized packages necessary to attract and retain proper personnel. He stated that steps were being taken in the current budget to create a new salary scale for personnel in the financial services sector,

similar to those of customs, police and immigration personnel, and of nurses and teachers. In addition, he noted that there was a provisional sum of US$ 70,000 to finance a thorough job classification exercise. The budget would also provide for an increase of 12 per cent in the general level of wages and salaries. He pointed out that the last increase had been in 1988 and that the Executive Council had decided that the Government would consider the issue of salary levels annually, having regard to increases in the cost of living and to the Government's ability to pay. The Chief Minister stressed that as the Territory had to fund larger proportions of its capital requirements from its limited resources and, as public sector borrowing requirements increased, the territorial Government would be seeking a leaner, more productive and responsive public service.

53. The Chief Minister highlighted as major achievements of the public service in 1992 the appointment of two nationals to the posts of Commissioner of Police and Attorney General. He declared that those achievements were a reflection of the efforts of successive Governments to educate its people to take their rightful place in the future development of their Territory, a policy which the present administration was committed to pursuing.

G. Other developments

54. There are no military installations in the British Virgin Islands. The Territory remains a port of call for naval vessels of the United Kingdom and the United States. In October 1993, HMS Active, accompanied by Royal Fleet auxiliary vessel Oakleaf, visited the Territory. While in the area, HMS Active assisted the local police in recovering 640 kilograms of cocaine from within the territorial waters. The wholesale value of the drugs was estimated between US$ 9 million and US$ 11 million. 23/

III. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

A. General

55. The economy of the British Virgin Islands remains dependent on tourism, financial services, real estate development, construction and government services. Agriculture and manufacturing activities continue to play a secondary role. According to CDB in its 1992 report, real economic growth rose from an estimated rate of 2 per cent in 1991, to 2.5 per cent in 1992. Most of this growth was attributed primarily to a recovery of private consumption, which increased sharply during the second half of 1992 in response to increases in commercial bank credit. Inflation declined to 3.2 in 1992. Per capita income in 1991 was estimated at US$ 10,479.

56. In his 1993 Budget Speech, the Chief Minister emphasized that in comparison with most Caribbean and Western European economies, the small and relatively open economy of the British Virgin Islands had once again demonstrated remarkable resilience. He noted that the Territory's growth and expansion in 1992 had been fuelled primarily by sizeable public spending, especially in the area of physical infrastructure. He stressed that implementation of the 1992

budget and the drafting of the 1993 budget estimates were both undertaken with the knowledge that the Government would need to lead in nurturing the Territory's economy through the most persistent recession in recent history. He stated that, in the absence of a territorial development plan, the budget estimates must play a significant role in articulating the Government's goals and objectives immediately and in the medium term. In that connection, the Chief Minister declared that the immediate objectives of the current budget would be:

(a) To continue to broaden and diversify the economic base of the Territory;

(b) To maximize the revenue potential of the Territory;

(c) To enhance and improve the quality of services which the Territory offered;

(d) To continue to build and/or facilitate the establishment of the basic economic foundation and physical infrastructure necessary for the attainment of sustainable growth and development.

57. CDB forecast that the Territory's economic performance over the medium term would depend essentially on the performance of the tourist and offshore financial services sectors. It noted that the recovery of North American economies and the success of the Territory's tourism marketing programme in Europe could improve local growth prospects. Prospects for offshore financial services appeared quite good and the sector should expand gradually, unless changes in legislation had a negative impact. CDB estimated that over the period from 1993 to 1995, the economy could grow by 3 to 4 per cent annually.

B. Public finance

58. On 28 April 1993, the Legislative Council approved the budget estimates for 1993. Recurrent revenue was estimated at approximately US$ 62.59 million (revised estimates for 1992 were US$ 60.5 million). Tax revenue accounted for approximately US$ 28.9 million, or 47 per cent of total revenue (45 per cent of 1992 revised estimates). Non-tax revenue (licences, rent and investments and royalties on the sale of coins) was estimated at US$ 20.06 million, or 31 per cent (the same percentage for 1992 revised revenue). Other non-tax revenue was estimated at US$ 13.6 million, or 22 per cent (24 per cent for the 1992 revised revenue). Recurrent expenditure for 1993 was estimated at US$ 59.3 million. The estimated surplus for 1993 of US$ 3.25 million would be allocated to the capital fund to assist in funding the Territory's capital development programme.

59. The Legislative Council approved a capital budget of US$ 34.5 million, of which funds from external sources accounted for US$ 21.24 million and local funds amounted to US$ 13.26 million. In his Budget Speech, the Chief Minister informed the Legislative Council that a close examination of the capital budget would reveal that not only was the Territory required to fund a greater portion of its capital development from scarce local resources, but that the

requirements for capital development were increasing significantly. The Chief Minister noted that, if the Territory's development was not to be thwarted, the Government would need to be innovative. It needed to resolve not only to balance its recurrent budgets but also to realize sizeable surpluses on its recurrent account in order to continue funding successive capital budgets, which were so integral to the Territory's development. He added that his administration had embarked on a programme aimed at identifying new revenue sources, stimulating private sector investment and optimizing the value of public expenditure.

60. In the same speech the Chief Minister expressed the appreciation of the territorial Government to its traditional donors, such as the United Kingdom, CDB, the European Investment Bank, the European Community, UNDP, the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, the Canadian International Development Agency, the International Development Research Centre of Canada and the United States Agency for International Development.

C. Land development and construction

61. As previously reported (A/AC.109/1060, para. 51), there are 15,280 hectares of land in the Territory. As at January 1988, nationals owned 7,084 hectares, expatriates owned 2,215 hectares and 5,819 hectares were classified as Crown land. In response to growing concerns of local groups and individuals over the sale of land to foreigners and over access by local people to beaches and other environmental issues, the territorial Government had announced the introduction of several new measures. Press reports indicate that a report was submitted to the Governor in December 1993 on the sale, since 1984, of Crown land. The report was prepared by a member of the London-based Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. The Governor declined to comment on it, but added that as a general policy it was his wish to make such reports public. 24/

62. Provision was made in the 1993 budget for the amendment of the House and Land Tax Ordinance. The Chief Minister, in noting that property values had increased more than tenfold since the last rate assessment, called upon land owners, both local and expatriate, to share more equitably with the Government the cost of administering the ensuing protection of such real property.

63. CDB reported that in 1992, construction activity increased slightly in the private sector, as a result of some relaxation in commercial bank credit. The rapid expansion in public sector construction also continued in 1992 as work intensified on several large projects such as port development, the main buildings of the Community College, and the Central Administration Complex.

64. In November 1993, the territorial Government invited bids from local contractors for the construction a new government prison on Tortola. The cost of the project was in excess of US$ 3.5 million. The deadline for the return of application was 22 November 1993. It was reported in December 1993 that the territorial Government had signed four contracts for construction and renovation work on Court facilities, legislative chambers, the home for the elderly and the residence of the Attorney General. The total estimated cost was US$ 1.3 million. 25/

D. Agriculture, livestock and fisheries

65. In April 1993, the Chief Minister reported that, as a result of the implementation of appropriate policies geared towards the small farmer, the estimated value of agricultural production increased from US$ 1.06 million in 1989 to US$ 1.4 million in 1992, or by 33 per cent. The Chief Minister stated that the proof of that improvement in quality and variety of products was evident at the recent agricultural exhibition. He stressed that, although a long way from being self-sufficient, it was a welcome sign to reduce the food import bill. The territorial Government announced that the third annual Farmers' Week would be celebrated from 29 January to 5 February 1994. The theme "Diversify: give local foods a try", was the same as the FAO World Food Day theme. 26/

66. Egg production declined in the Territory in 1992. In an attempt to increase egg production, the Department of Agriculture was reported to be considering training local poultry farmers in management. Also it has allocated modern poultry units at the Paraquita Bay Agricultural Station. In that connection, two poultry farmers attended a four-day training programme on egg production and marketing in Antigua, sponsored by the Canadian Training Awards Project. 27/

67. Some 16 head of cattle were exported to St. Barts, Netherlands Antilles, early in 1993 and, in October 1993, a second shipment of 18 head of cattle was exported, with further shipment expected to follow. 28/

68. In other developments, the Department of Conservation and Fisheries announced the annual migration to the Territory's waters of the humpback and other whale species. Between 60 and 100 of these whales, which are an endangered species, visit the area annually. The Department also announced that the Territory had received a report prepared by the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Recovery and Conservation Network following a study that began in 1987 and ended in early 1993. The study was funded by the United Nations Environment Programme and was intended to provide guidelines for the Territory's sea turtle recovery efforts. In January 1994, the Territory hosted a five-day workshop, sponsored by USAID on strengthening surveillance of the Territory's fisheries resources. The workshop was attended by officials of the United States Coast Guard, the Governments of the British Virgin Islands and the United States Virgin Islands, and the University of the West Indies.

E. Industrial development and mining

69. CDB reported that the low level of activity in the manufacturing sector during 1991 continued into 1992, again mainly as a result of the poor performance of the tourist industry.

70. The Chief Minister, in recognizing the need for the Government to take an increasingly active role in stimulating private sector economic activity, announced a number of initiatives in the 1993 budget. These include strengthening and expanding the programmes of the Trade, Investment and Promotion Department to include consumer protection and small business

development; the review of current incentive legislation, with a view to enhancing certain provisions to place greater emphasis on local business; the establishment of an ad hoc committee on private investment opportunities; and the establishment of the British Virgin Islands Film Commission.

71. According to press reports, the Chief Minister approved the granting of a trade licence to the Canadian-based Custom Brew Beer System of Hamilton to set up a brewery in the Territory. The brewery was expected to be in operation by March 1994. The newspaper noted that, in keeping with environmental concerns, the owners of the Brew Beer System elected to use returnable bottles and kegs of various sizes instead of cans. 29/

F. Communications and other basic facilities

72. Information concerning the Territory's capital development projects based on a three-year plan is contained in the previous working paper prepared by the Secretariat (A/AC.109/1142, paras. 65-67).

73. In April 1993, the Legislative Council approved the 1993 budget, which included a capital budget of US$ 34.5 million. The Chief Minister drew attention to the sizeable allocation for the completion of the Central Administration Complex. He listed several projects contained in the current budget, including:

(a) General renovation of government buildings and designated emergency shelters;

(b) Continuation of the Road Town improvement schemes and of construction of the community college;

(c) Phased development of beach sites;

(d) New and continuing land acquisition schemes;

(e) Continuation of the incinerator project;

(f) Completion, continuation or preparatory work for community centres;

(g) Counterpart funding for road improvement and maintenance projects and water-supply projects;

(h) Minor roads improvement scheme.

74. In addition, the Chief Minister stated that the Government proposed to spend US$ 5.8 million over the next three years to provide urgently needed classroom facilities at the high school.

75. American Airlines announced that it would initiate a daily round-trip flight between San Juan and Tortola. Additionally, USAir introduced daily flights from the Baltimore/Washington area to St. Thomas; and Delta Airlines

increased its flights between New York and St. Thomas. Passengers en route to the British Virgin Islands would be accommodated by a ferry service. 30/

G. International business and finance

76. The number of international business companies registered in the Territory increased by 20,000 in 1992, or by 30 per cent over 1991 figures. The amount of government revenue from this source also increased from US$ 16 million in 1991 to US$ 21 million in 1992.

77. The Chief Minister informed the Legislative Council in April 1993 that, on the advice of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, through its Financial Services Adviser to the United Kingdom dependent Territories, the territorial Government had decided to establish a department of financial services. The new Department would be headed by the Director of Financial Services, whose role would include coordination of the activities of the various divisions and professionals, such as the Insurance Supervisor, Bank and Trust Companies Inspector and the Registrar of Companies.

78. In an address before the dependent Territories Financial Secretaries Panel at a meeting held in the Territory in September 1993, the Chief Minister stated that the fact that the new banking licensing policies to be applied to all United Kingdom dependent Territories closely resembled those of the Territory reaffirmed the prudence and soundness of the Territory's current policy. He observed that the Territory was the only one in which responsibility for offshore financial matters rested with an elected representative, the Minister for Finance. In addition to the Directors for Financial Services of Anguilla, Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands, the Economic Secretary of the United Kingdom Treasury and other United Kingdom officials attended the meeting. 31/

79. In other information concerning this subsector, it was reported in November 1993 that the number of international business companies had increased to 90,000. In January 1994, the Chief Minister appointed a special Financial Services Legislation Advisory Committee to recommend legislative measures necessary to enhance the attractiveness of the Territory as a financial centre. The Committee is comprised of the Director of Financial Services and the Attorney General, as chairmen, and other members, including the Parliamentary Counsel and the Registrar of Companies. Resource persons will be drawn from the banking community. 3/

80. CDB reported that, at the end of September 1992, bank loans and advances stood at US$ 191 million, up 19.9 per cent from total loans outstanding at the end of 1991. At the same time, total deposits increased by 9.9 per cent to US$ 361.3 million. As a result, the loans-to-deposit ratio increased from 48.4 per cent to 52.9 per cent.

H. Tourism and related activities

81. According to CDB, visitor arrivals declined by 6.9 per cent in 1992 to 269,399. Stopover visitors decreased by 31.6 per cent to 100,497, while cruise ship arrivals declined by 7.1 per cent to 87,551. Conversely, the number of excursionists rose by 7.09 per cent to 81,351.

82. In his 1993 Budget Speech, the Chief Minister stated that, in order to reverse the above negative trends, the Tourist Board would intensify its marketing thrust in the European and North American markets. Similar efforts included such initiatives as the enactment of the Commercial Recreational Vessels Licensing Act and the related ongoing implementation of a new charter boat strategy. Other initiatives included granting duty-free concessions to retailers of popular tourism items.

83. A government study indicated that, for the first time since 1990, the number of tourist arrivals had increased. A comparison had been made between arrivals during the first quarter of 1990 and the same period during 1993. The Director of Tourism explained that the study compared 1993 with 1990, since it was the last year of growth. He expressed the expectation that arrivals for the whole of 1993 would show that tourist arrivals were rising and that 1994 figures would be fairly strong. 32/

84. The Territory hosted the seventeenth meeting of Caribbean Tourism Organization's Board of Directors. Some 75 participants attended, including representatives from throughout the Caribbean region and the European Union. 29/

I. Assistance from specialized agencies and other organizations and institutions of the United Nations system

85. Information concerning assistance from United Nations sources is contained in the report of the President of the Economic and Social Council on consultations with the Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, 33/ as well as in the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation and coordination of the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations in their assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/48/224 and Corr.1 and A/48/224/Add.1-3).

86. The UNDP Resident Representative for the Eastern Caribbean continues to serve as Resident Coordinator of the operational activities of the United Nations system for the Territory. In his statement to the Fourth Committee on 18 October 1993, 34/ the representative of UNDP stated, inter alia, that the British Virgin Islands and Bermuda, because of their high per capita income, had net contributor status. He noted that UNDP focused its support on human resources development, economic and social development planning, environmental programmes and tourism. As small island developing countries, all the Territories were receiving UNDP assistance in preparation for the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States held in Barbados from 25 April to 6 May 1994. He added that support was also being

provided by the United Nations Population Fund for those Territories to participate in the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held at Cairo in 1994.

87. In that connection, the Territory participated in the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development, held in Mexico from 29 April to 4 May 1993; and the Regional Technical Meeting for the Atlantic, Caribbean and Mediterranean, a preparatory meeting to the Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The regional meeting was held at Port-of-Spain, from 12 to 16 July 1993.

88. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/193 of 21 December 1993, the Territory, as an associate member of ECLAC, was invited to participate in the resumed first session of the Preparatory Committee for the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, in New York from 7 to 11 March 1994.

J. External debt and trade

89. CDB reported that in 1992 the disbursed and outstanding external debt was US$ 35 million, compared with US$ 32 million in 1991. Multilateral debt accounted for 97 per cent of the total debt. In his 1993 Budget Speech, the Chief Minister disclosed that debt-service obligations for 1993 were estimated at US$ 3.28 million, or 5 per cent of projected revenue. Debt service payments were expected to increase slightly each year, up to approximately US$ 5.5 million in 1997. The Chief Minister expressed appreciation to the Commonwealth Secretariat for assistance in the installation of a computerized debt recording and monitoring system, to aid the Territory in the management of the public debt.

IV. SOCIAL CONDITIONS

A. Labour

90. As previously reported, the Territory relies heavily on expatriate labour, particularly in the tourism and financial services sectors, and the territorial Government with the help of foreign donors has increased its efforts to develop its human resources (A/AC.109/1142, paras. 82-85).

91. During the period under review, it was reported that the territorial Government had developed a national integrated development plan for the period from 1994 to 1998. During a visit to the Territory in 1993, the ECLAC Population Affairs Officer stated, inter alia, that the saturation of qualified workers in some areas and the paucity in others could be connected within the above plan, with programmes designed to guide students in careers which the Territory needed for continued growth. That advice was reiterated in a report released in September 1993 by the Task Force for Promoting Investment, which called upon the Government to institute a policy whereby imported skilled labour should be matched by parallel programmes aimed at training nationals who would replace those workers. The report also stated that the tourism and the

financial services sectors should employ more management trainees, as well as contribute to their education. 35/

92. As a follow-up to a proposal contained in the 1993 Budget Speech that the Government would provide incentives to attract qualified personnel and reduce waste, it was reported in January 1994 that, under a new policy, expatriate government employees would be eligible for a housing allowance for only two years. It was noted that the cost of housing subsidies in 1993 was nearly US$ 1 million and that salaries were now sufficiently competitive. 36/

B. Public health

93. The Territory continued to be served by the Peebles Hospital on Tortola and by a number of health clinics throughout the Territory. There is also a private hospital. The Territory's first full-time pathologist was appointed with effect from 1 November 1993. The Chief Medical Officer stated that the appointment would end the delays in obtaining autopsies in cases of sudden death.

94. It was reported in November 1993 that the Territory participated in a regional project intended to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of health care. Under the Health Sector Adjustment Project, launched by the United Kingdom, health-care advisers from Keele University in the United Kingdom would work with the territorial Government over the next several years, to identify and facilitate reforms in the planning, management and provision of health services. 37/

95. It was reported that the Territory hosted a subregional workshop on Hospital Administration in June 1993. Eight Caribbean countries participated in the workshop, which was sponsored by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). During the same month, representatives of the Territory, the United Kingdom Overseas Development Administration, PAHO and the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre reviewed the national acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and sexual health programme, which covered the period from April 1992 to March 1993. The team also assisted with the development of a programme of activities up to March 1994. The Territory conducted a healthy lifestyles survey in December 1993 and an adolescent and youth health needs survey in January and February 1994. The latter survey, which covers foods and nutrition, drugs, crime and violence, general health and personal relationships, would target the age groups of 12 to 24.

C. Crime prevention and drugs

96. In September 1993, an open forum on the criminal justice system was informed that criminal offences in the Territory were on the increase and that police resources were inadequate. A total of 758 crimes were reported to the police during the first eight months of 1993, compared to 704 during the first nine months of 1992. The Chairman of the Police Advisory Committee outlined several recommendations of the Committee to address the group crime problem. Those recommendations included the establishment of a rehabilitation centre for

juvenile offenders, a treatment centre for drug addicts and increased resources and training programmes for the police. 31/

97. It was reported previously that the United Kingdom Inspector-General of the dependent Territories Police Force had conducted a review of the Territory's police in relation to the increase in serious crime (A/AC.109/1142, para. 90). According to press reports in December 1993, all but 8 of the 32 proposals made by the Inspector-General for the Police Department had been either fully or partially implemented. Most of the remaining proposals were in the process of being implemented. The report and list of recommendations were presented to the Governor in September 1992, and subsequently a 17-member police advisory committee was formed to advise the Governor on ways to improve crime fighting. 8/

98. Acting on the advice of the Police Advisory Committee, the Governor commissioned a survey on police relations with the public. The results of the survey released in October 1993 indicated that about 60 per cent of respondents had a favourable perception of the police, about two thirds said they felt generally safe and 90 per cent stated that drugs should be the number one crime-fighting priority. The Police Commissioner stated that a number of initiatives had been put into effect, which reflected the survey findings, including the establishment of a major crime squad and intelligence division to address violent crime; intensified crime prevention efforts; and a programme to protect tourists. 4/

99. Major developments concerning the problem of drugs in the Territory are outlined below. In September 1993, six foreign nationals pleaded guilty to smuggling charges, relating to two tons of marijuana that were seized by police and customs agents. The men were given sentences of three years in prison. The marijuana was valued at over US$ 20 million. 31/

100. In October 1993, a United Kingdom national was appointed as Chief of the Drug Unit, a position that had been vacant for several months. 38/ It was also reported 38/ that, during the same month, the Legislative Council passed the Criminal Justice (International Cooperation) Act, 1993, which, inter alia, would enable the Territory to cooperate with other countries in criminal proceedings and investigations and join the league of other countries in implementing the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. 39/

101. In December 1993, the Governor of the Territory, in a keynote address at the graduation ceremony at the regional Police Training Centre in Barbados, stated that drugs were the most serious threat to the political, economic and moral stability of Caribbean societies. In that connection, he stressed that cooperation was needed for police forces, particularly smaller ones, such as that of the British Virgin Islands, to combat drugs effectively. He recommended that all Caribbean Territories should enter into agreements that would enable law enforcement vessels to enter each other's territorial waters, as long as a local police officer was aboard. He added that such an agreement between the United States Virgin Islands and the British Virgin Islands had proven effective (see also para. 50). In response to concerns expressed by government officials and community leaders on the need for a drug treatment centre, a consultant was

appointed for a one-year term to assist in the implementation of a substance-abuse programme. 40/

V. EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS

102. Education in the Territory continued to be free and compulsory for all children between 5 and 14 years of age. The territorial Government maintained as a priority the strengthening of the educational system. In his Budget Speech of April 1993, the Chief Minister underscored the importance of education as the foundation on which the Territory must build its future. He stated that the Government had earmarked US$ 1 million of drug-related funds received from seized assets, and that the sum of US$ 5.8 million was urgently needed for additional classroom facilities over the next three years.

103. According to the territorial Government, the Canadian Training Awards Project was the largest external source of funding available to the Territory. The project coordinator of the Project visited the Territory in June 1993 to review the Territory's long- and short-term training needs. 41/ In August 1993, OECS, in conjunction with the German Agency for Technical Cooperation and the European Community conducted a survey on technical vocational education and training in the Territory. The purpose of the survey was to establish a comprehensive data system covering education, training and labour market information in OECS countries to contribute to informed policy decisions.

104. In other developments, it was reported that an anthropologist with management experience in the private sector had been appointed Vice-President of the College. Also, a new building for the campus of the British Virgin Islands Community College had been completed and was officially opened in August 1993. Enrolment at the College had increased from 135 in 1990 to 450 during the current academic year.

105. It was reported that in December 1993, the Board of Governors of the Community College, in addition to its academic programme, had approved a curriculum for a vocational technical programme. The new programme, which is to begin in the spring 1994 semester, will include certification in building construction, land surveying techniques, cabinet and furniture making, metal work and welding technology, as well as in arts and crafts. 42/

Notes

1/ The information contained in the present paper has been derived from published reports, including the Caribbean Development Bank Annual Report 1992, and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations on 13 July 1993 for the years 1992 and 1993.

2/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 15 January 1994.

3/ The Beacon (Tortola), 6 January 1994.

4/ Ibid., 28 October 1993.

5/ Ibid., 4 November 1993.

6/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 16 October 1993.

7/ The Beacon (Tortola), 25 November 1993.

8/ Ibid., 2 December 1993.

9/ Department of Information and Public Relations, news release No. 103R/93.

10/ The Beacon (Tortola), 16 January 1994.

11/ Department of Information and Public Relations, news release Nos. 087R/93, 089R/93 and 090R/93.

12/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 21 August 1993.

13/ Department of Information and Public Relations, news release No. 273R/93.

14/ Statement of Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, dated 24 November 1993 and provided by the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations.

15/ Statement of the Minister for Overseas Development Administration, dated 14 June 1993 and provided by the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations.

16/ The Beacon (Tortola), 13 November 1993.

17/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Fourth Committee, 4th meeting, and corrigendum.

18/ Department of Information and Public Relations, news release No. 278R/93.

19/ Ibid., news releases Nos. 192R/93 and 010R/94; see also The Beacon (Tortola), 23 September 1994.

20/ Department of Information and Public Relations, news releases Nos. 059R/93, 132R/93, 238R/93 and 291R/93.

21/ Ibid., news releases Nos. 163R/93; 232R/93; see also The Island Sun (Tortola), 11 September 1993.

22/ The Beacon (Tortola), 16 December 1993; and The Island Sun (Tortola), 18 December 1993.

23/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 6 November 1993.

24/ The Beacon (Tortola), 13 January 1994.

25/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 13 November and 25 December 1993.

26/ Department of Information and Public Relations, news release No. 286R/93.

27/ Ibid., news release No. 101R/93.

28/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 2 October 1993.

29/ Ibid., 8 January 1994.

30/ The Beacon (Tortola), 7 October 1993.

31/ Ibid., 30 September 1993.

32/ Ibid., 6 and 27 January 1994.

33/ E/1993/98.

34/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Fourth Committee, 6th meeting, and corrigendum.

35/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 25 September 1993.

36/ The Beacon (Tortola), 27 January 1994.

37/ Ibid., 11 November 1993.

38/ Ibid., 7 October 1993; see also The Island Sun (Tortola), 2 October 1993.

39/ E/CONF.82/15 and Corr.2.

40/ Ibid., 16 December 1993.

41/ Department of Information and Public Relations, news release No. 131R/93.

42/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 14 August and 18 December 1993.